

CONGRATS TO ...

Billings Symphony Orchestra conductor **Matthew Savery**, who performs June 5 at Carnegie Hall in New York City with solo violinist Alexander Markov and a string orchestra. Now in his 21st season as music director of the Bozeman Symphony Orchestra and Symphonic Choir and continuing in his seventh season as music director of the Wyoming Symphony Orchestra, Savery has a reputation as an electrifying performer, dedicated orchestra builder and charismatic teacher. Markov visited Bozeman in September 2014 to perform Paganini's second violin concerto as part of the Bozeman Symphony's "Discover the Wild" performance. The world-renowned violin virtuoso has been described as "the hippest violinist on the planet." Savery's Carnegie Hall debut includes performances of Vivaldi's epic "Four Seasons," with Heike Doerr on harpsichord, Tchaikovsky's Serenades and Vitali's Chaconne. For details, visit www.carnegiehall.org.



Maestro Matthew Savery

The **Crawford Brothers Band** of Great Falls, which was chosen to play two 90-minute concerts Sept. 4 and 6 at Bingley Music Live, a festival in Bingley, UK. "I'm excited," says the band's namesake Nick Crawford. "Five-digit paycheck, five-star accommodations, transportation around London, and they are also buying us instruments when we get there so we don't have to pack ours around with us." The country-western band covers the tunes of country greats "from George Strait to Garth Brooks to Johnny Cash."



Shirley and Ben Steele meet with U.S. Sen. Jon Tester.

(Photo by Bob Zellar/Courtesy of the Billings Gazette)

you Ben," Tester said. The citation, entered into the Congressional Record, preserves Steele's role in U.S. history forever, Tester said. Steele was a 23-year-old soldier in the Philippines when the Japanese attacked in December 1941. Steele and the other soldiers were taken prisoner and forced from the Bataan Peninsula on a six-day march. Those who struggled along the way were shot or bayoneted to death. Steele spent more than three years in prison, drawing his experience on the concrete floor of his cell. He wasn't freed until after the United States dropped atomic bombs on Japan. Steele pursued an art career after the war, teaching at Eastern Montana College in Billings for several years. One of Montana's most beloved artists, he has been honored several times, and he and his wife, Shirley, are Governor's Arts Award recipients. Steele said it was a great honor for his story to be entered into the Congressional Record.

— Reprinted with permission from the *Billings Gazette*, Jan. 17

Billings artist **Ben Steele**, 97, whose story of surviving the Bataan Death March during World War II was read into the Congressional Record in December by U.S. Sen. Jon Tester. The senator stopped by the Billings veteran's home in January to deliver the transcript of the tribute. "I appreciate what you've done for this country, what you've done for the state of Montana and the example you set for people all over this country. So, thank



"America the Beautiful"
by Willem Volkersz

the Arlene and Harold Schnitzer Center for Art and Design, and guest curatorial advisor Jessica Hunter Larsen. Volkersz, who emigrated with his family from Amsterdam to Seattle at 14, employs painting and sculpture to narrate growing up in 1950s America. With over 50 exhibitions, his work has been displayed across the country as well as internationally. "From nomination to final prize, this biennial awards process delivers a twofold benefit: It allows the Portland Art Museum

Bozeman artist **Willem Volkersz**, who won a 2015 Contemporary Northwest Art Award from the Portland Art Museum. His work will be featured in the 2015 Contemporary Northwest Art Awards exhibition opening in October, which celebrates contemporary art created in the greater Northwest (Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Wyoming and Montana). The seven winners were chosen from 24 finalists based on the recommendations of Bonnie Laing-Malcolmson, curator of Northwest art for

to identify a number of the Northwest's exceptional talents, and it provides the museum with a far deeper understanding of the new work taking place in the region by both established and emerging artists," said Laing-Malcolmson.

Artist **Janice Bogy** of Whitehall, whose scratchboard work, "Quiet Presence," was selected by North Light Books for its publication, *Strokes of Genius 6 – Value/Lights and Darks*. Bogy's work graces the back cover of the hardcover, coffee-table book, which features 144 works selected from thousands of entries. It was released in October 2014. The Siberian tiger portrayed by Bogy resides at the Triple D Game Farm in Kalispell, a place that allows Montana artists the opportunity to get up-close and personal with endangered species rarely seen in the wild. "Quiet Presence" also won second place at the Montana Interpretations Show in Butte in June and was juried into the 22nd annual Breckenridge Fine Arts Show in Breckenridge, TX, featuring works from 15 states.



"Quiet Presence" by Janice Bogy

Kalispell artist **Carol McSweeney**, whose painting, "Sunday Drive," received top honors in the figure category of *Southwest Art Magazine's* annual competition and was featured in the January issue.

She also received a cash award at the San Diego Watercolor Society's International Exhibition, Oct. 1-31 at the society's gallery in San Diego. Her work has been accepted into the American Watercolor Society's International Exhibition, April 6-25 at the Salmagundi Club in New York City; the Signature American Watermedia Exhibition in Fallbrook, CA; and the Western Federation of Watercolor Societies' 40th Annual Exhibition, April 16-July 15 in Lubbock, TX. She also took second place in watermedia at the Scottsdale Artist School's Best and Brightest Exhibit, on display through February in Scottsdale, AZ. McSweeney has resided in Montana full-time for more than 30 years, and now divides her time between the desert of Arizona and the Flathead Valley. In addition to frequent participation in juried exhibitions and annual shows, a selection of her work may be viewed at the Kalispell Grand Hotel, Harper Studio in Arizona and The Watercolor Gallery in Laguna Beach, CA.



"Sunday Drive" by Carol McSweeney

Missoula author **Pete Fromm**, who won the Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association (PNBA) award for fiction for his novel, *If Not For This*. Fromm's latest book tells the story of Maddy, diagnosed with multiple sclerosis just as her adult life begins, who faces life and family challenges and milestones with an ever deteriorating body and a fierce sense of humor. This marks the author's fifth PNBA award-winning book, joining *Indian Creek Chronicles* (1994), *Dry Rain* (1998), *How All This Started* (2001) and *As Cool as I Am* (2004). **Walter Kirm** of Livingston was on the short list with his memoir, *Blood Will Out*.

Filmmakers **Anna Hudak and Nicolas Hudak**, whose documentary, "Where God Likes To Be," a film shot on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation, received three "Best Of" awards at the third annual Flathead Lake International Cinemafest (FLIC), held Jan. 23-25 in Polson. The film, which portrays what it means to be Native American today, received the People's Choice Award, Best Indigenous Film and Honorable Mention Best Picture, Documentary Feature.

MAPS Media Institute after-school program in Hamilton, which received a Big Sky Film grant from the Montana Film Office to create video productions that promote tourism in Ravalli County. The videos feature Darby's Logger Days and the Bull O'Rama. Deny Staggs, head of the Montana Film Office, told the *Ravalli Republic*, "We want to give young people real-world experience producing content that has a place to go, plus it is good for promotions to show authentic Montana. We were thrilled when they applied (for the grant) and knew the production was in good hands – the product is beautiful." Peter Rosten, founder and CEO of MAPS, credits three MAPS students who "really ran with this ball": **Caleb Hallahan**, a home-schooler; **Wyatt Campbell**, a Darby student; and **Cameron Smith**, one of the original MAPS students from Corvallis, who was home for the summer and helped out. Christian Ackerman supervised the effort. "The assignment was to capture the events and position them to encourage tourism, and I think we did that quite adequately," says Rosten. To watch the MAPS student-produced tourism videos, go to vimeo.com/115878336 and vimeo.com/114146740.

— From the *Ravalli Republic*, Jan. 14

Continued on next page



3

Send us your good news

Artists, writers, musicians, arts educators and arts administrators: Please let us know about major awards and accomplishments, especially beyond the borders of Montana.

Send your good news to Congrats, c/o *Lively Times*, 33651 Eagle Pass Trail, Charlo, MT 59824; or email: writeus@livelytimes.com.

If you include a digital photo, please make sure it's at least 200 lines per inch (lpi or dpi) or file size of over 500kb.

Congrats compiled by Kristi Niemeyer for State of the Arts



Wyatt Campbell (Darby High School) and Caleb Hallahan (home-school student) line up a shot for a promotional video, created by MAPS Media Institute after-school program for the Montana Film Office.